1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930) 1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

THE LOVEDU

By FERDINAND KRUGER

101 128 The Lovedu are a Bantu-tribe residing in the East of the Northern Transvaal. The history of the tribe which is published here is the work of a Lovedu. With assistance of a number of old Lovedu-men and some teachers I tested the facts and rewrote the whole paper in correct Lovedu-dialect. The translation given by me is as literal as possible.

104 Vowels: *a, e, i, o, ɔ, u.*

Semivowels: *y, w.*

Consonants:

Nasals: *m, n, ɲ* (dental) *ṅ* (velar).

Fricatives: *v, f,* (both bilabial); *z, s,*; *ž š; hh,*[1] *h; l, ɬ* (dental); *ʃʰ; r.*

Plosives: *b, p; g, k; d, ḍ* (dental) *t, ṭ* (dental).

Affricates: *tsh, tšh.*

Diacritical letters:

h after a symbol=aspiration.

w after a symbol="back labialization."

y after a symbol="front labialization."

y after a nasal=palatalization.

[1] *hh* voiced aspirate *h.*

[2] *l* see A. N. Tucker, M.A.—*The Comparative Phonetics of the Suto-Chuana Group of Bantu Languages*, p. 48, 143. London 1929.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

THE LOVEDU

1. The Lovedu-tribe took its origin in Mashonaland. Therefore, when a Lovedu salutes, they say:" In truth, Lovedu, in truth Khalaga,[1] person of Ledaža,[2] person who comes from Mashonaland!" Furthermore they are " the Pigs of Mohale."[3]—They say there is the home of the Lovedu.[4]

2. They say the king there had two sons. Now one of them[5] was given the rain.[6] Afterwards the elder brother desired the thing of the younger one. He went to ask his younger brother for the rain. But the younger brother refused to give him the rain. The elder brother rose against him with spears.[7] The younger brother escaped southward,[8] he crossed the Limpopo-river of Mashonaland. On the way they separated into two groups. One tended towards the South and settled at Vyaḏadi[9] namely the Mamabolo-tribe. They are also " Pigs[10] of Maḏaži."[11]

3. Now the Lovedu were looking for a nice country with fertile soil and with ant-hills.[12] They sent the young men in advance to look out for such a country. And indeed—when these passed Vendaland they found the right country having merula-trees and ant-hills in the east of the mountain where there is established " Medingen "[13] to-day—namely at Khumelo.[14]

4. They found that there was living another tribe called that of Kheoga.[15] Those people did not know the fire. They ate all their food unboiled. They ate it just like the wild animals.

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[1] Name for the inhabitants of Mashonaland.

[2] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[3] Name of chief.

[4] I was given the following explanation of the word " Lovedu ": *Volovedu hhe hho khe fhedolwa ge hhore : mo hho lovahho zwilo, e lêhho vathu le ḏikhomu le riṅgu.*—Lovedu means: there where things namely persons, cattle, goats and sheep are being brought as offerings.

[5] The younger one.

[6] The instruments and formulae to prepare the rain-medicine.

[7] Chief weapon.

[8] Literally: upwards.

[9] Mountains near Haenertsburg.

[10] Lovedu and Mamabolo praise the same animal: the wild pig.

[11] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[12] Ants = a delicacy.

[13] Mission Station.

[14] Name of mountain.

[15] Another Bantu-tribe.

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
Thonga FT6
Venda FX19

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THE PLACE OF THE NORTH-EASTERN TRANSVAAL SOTHO IN THE SOUTH BANTU COMPLEX

EILEEN JENSEN-KRIGE

L 101 131

THE Sotho of the North-Eastern Transvaal Lowveld occupy an area with fairly well-marked geographical boundaries. To the east, the Game Reserve, low-lying, unhealthy, very sparsely populated even in the old days, remains an effective barrier to contact with and further migrations from the Shangana-Tonga of Portuguese East Africa. South are the Olifants River and the towering Drakensberg range curving north-west then northwards to merge into the well-marked escarpment on the west dividing Lowveld from Highveld. On the north the Klein Letaba river roughly demarcates our area from the Venda and the Shangana-Tonga of the Knobnose Location. The Sotho-speaking Venda of Tswale and Moila, who fall well within this area, resemble in culture their Sotho-ized neighbours more than their own Venda kin to the north; but the Shangana-Tonga, who occupy most of the lower-lying eastern and north-eastern portion of the area and comprise at least one-third of its total population, are unassimilated strangers of different stock coming from the north-east and east. They have been entering since about 1840, usually in small bands, at first seeking the protection of and subjecting themselves to the Sotho owners of the land. On the arrival

V 101 191

T 101 131

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[p. 265]

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
Thonga FT6

of the white man, some of their headmen were granted independent locations which have served as nuclei for the building up of more united tribal groups. (See accompanying map.)

The most important Sotho tribes of this area are the Lobedu, the Narene and the Khaha who together comprise about three-quarters of the total Sotho population.[1] The outstanding demographical feature is, however, the numerical predominance of the Lobedu who, with a population of well over 40,000, are not only the greatest tribe, but outnumber all the other Sotho-speaking tribes put together.[2] The pre-eminence and cultural influence of the Lobedu in this area does not rest solely upon their numerical preponderance. It is based largely upon the fame of their queen, Modjadji, who as the greatest rain-maker in the Northern Transvaal, is not only regularly approached with gifts by other chiefs but also sometimes places them on the throne (*ho bea bohosi*) and is appealed to in cases of disputed succession.

This area, though forming part of a greater cultural whole including the Northern Transvaal Highveld and probably Pediland to the south, is, however, sharply characterized by distinctive features, such as ritual suicide of the chief and recognition of women as rulers in their own right, that are not found elsewhere. These are sufficient to form a fairly well-defined culture pattern, which, owing to the overwhelming numerical preponderance of the Lobedu, if for no other reason,

[1] The Sotho population of our area is made up as follows, according to van Warmelo:

Lobedu	8237 taxpayers.		
Narene	2521	„	(Mahlo 1332, Letswalo 1189).
Khaha	1608	„	
Thabina (Moxoboya)	1088	„	
Phalaborwa	332	„	
Makxoba	700	„	
Baha Mamidja	413	„	
Shai or Tsubye	256	„	
Tswale	357	„	Sotho-speaking Venda.
Moila	260	„	

The only large tribal groups among Shangana-Tonga are

Mohlaba	2918 taxpayers.	
Nwamitwa	1347	„

[2] The proportion is Lobedu 8237 taxpayers.
rest 7535 „

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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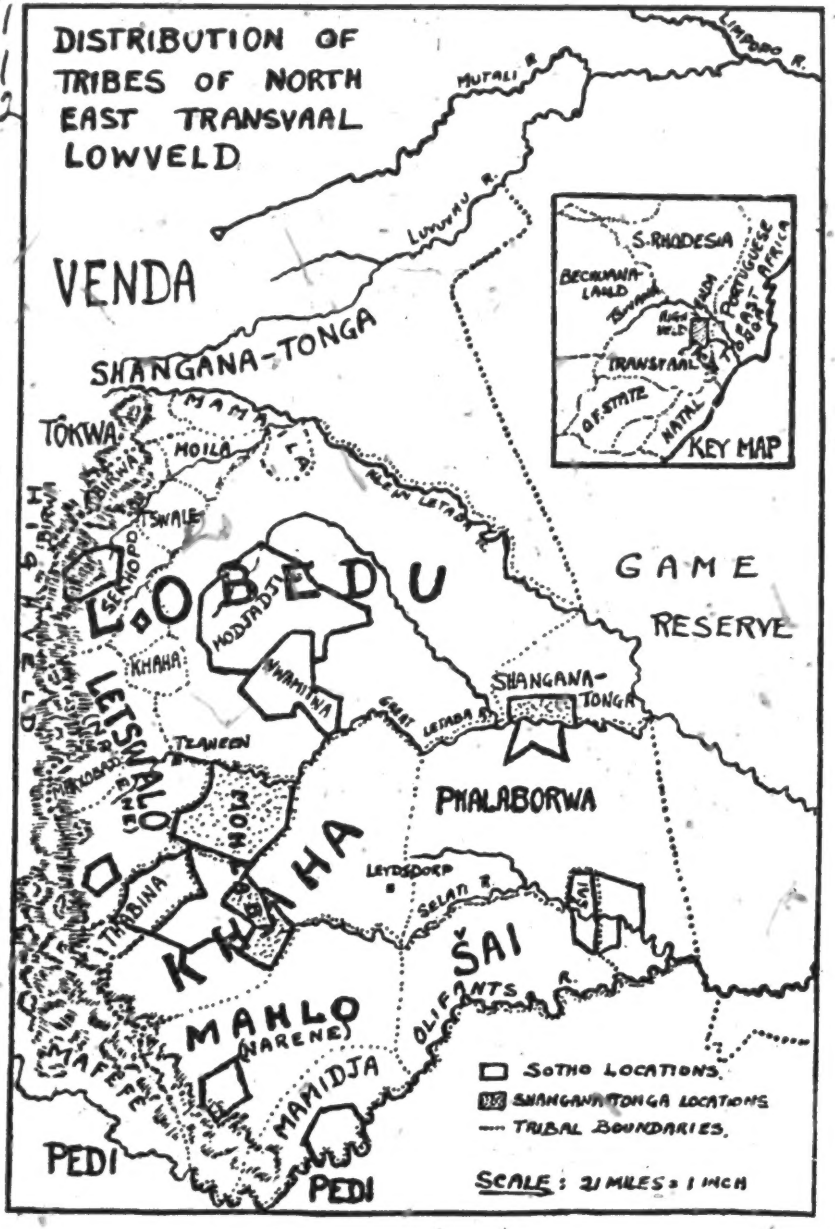

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

one might call the Lobedu culture complex, though it is not at all clear what the origin of its differentiating features is. In its most typical form this culture is found among the Lobedu of Modjadji, the Letswalo and the Khaha. To the north-west it merges into the not very different Venda culture complex; to the south, Pedi influences, noticeable on the edge of the Drakensberg, become increasingly apparent among the Mahlo and eventually predominate among the Baha Mamidja on the banks of the Olifants. In the east, the Phalaborwa have developed specialized responses to the challenge of an arid bushveld environment; while to the west along the escarpment, Tokwa influences are so marked that the Sekhopo branch of the Lobedu, who live there, differ more from the Lobedu of Modjadji than do the unrelated Khaha and Letswalo.[1] These gradations are to some extent hidden by the fact that owing to the mixed composition of every tribe differences in custom in any single tribe are often as great as differences from one tribe to another. The nature of this Lowveld cultural pattern, those features peculiar to this area and those held in common with other tribes, will best be shown by a short account in general terms of various aspects of the social and economic organization of these tribes.

General Aspects of the Lowveld Village. The Lowveld village, nestling among the trees and shrubs of the surrounding bushveld vegetation, which usually provides a natural fence, differs in general aspect from that of the Highveld tribes with its well-smeared, high-walled courtyards. While there is a tendency in the south, among Narene of Segororo and to a lesser extent among Thabina and Maake's Khaha, for villages to straggle in lines along the hill-sides, there is nowhere any sign of the large agglomerations of dwellings so typical of the Tswana town and present in an attenuated form also among Tokwa of the Highveld. The Lowveld village is not large, consisting generally of from two to twenty huts; but there is evidence that when times were more unsettled and the need for protection kept

[1] The Birwa who live partly in the Lowveld, partly in the Highveld, probably belong to the Lobedu culture complex. Though their culture differs in many respects from that of the Lowveld tribes there are also marked similarities, such as ritual suicide of the chief.

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
FX14 Lovedu FX14

THE LOVEDU OF THE TRANSVAAL

By J. D. *and* E. J. KRIGE

The World View of the Lovedu

●101 THE Lovedu are a South Bantu tribe ruled by a divine queen. They live amid fertile foothills and forest-clad ravines below the Drakensberg escarpment in the north-eastern Transvaal. Their country, of which the present Mujaji Reserve is but a small portion, is situated near the frontiers of the main masses of Sotho-Tswana, Venda, Tsonga, and Nguni peoples; and it was important for the development of Lovedu institutions that the great migratory movements of these major groups skirted round this geographically insulated area.

144 177 563 642 Before the coming of the Lovedu the population of this area appears to have been predominantly Sotho not unmixed with Karanga, Tsonga, and Nguni elements. Then, about three centuries ago, a small group of Karanga immigrants from the crumbling empire of Monomatapa in Southern Rhodesia arrived and gradually incorporated the local population. From this group the royal house of the Lovedu traces its descent, and it was these people who introduced the complex of royal institutions which eventually became crucial for the world view of the Lovedu tribe. For two centuries, the formative period of their development, they enjoyed peace during which they came to dominate the area and to establish firmly the conception of the divine kingship which they had brought from the north. The situation was complicated at first by the numerical weakness of the nuclear group and the diversity of the incorporated alien groups; and a major challenge was later presented by the influx in the first half of the nineteenth century of great numbers of refugees fleeing from the depredations of Shaka, Moselekatse, and others, and seeking sanctuary in the inviolable realm of Mujaji, the rain queen of the Lovedu. They responded to this challenge by an adaptation of the pattern of the sacred kingship that facilitated incorporation of alien elements, and the result has been a remarkably coherent and well-integrated way of life.

Some Aspects of Lovedu Social Structure

231 241 Despite some unique emphases, Lovedu culture is not atypical of the South Bantu. They practise a mixed economy of hoe-culture and cattle-rearing with, however, less reliance upon cattle than Nguni or Tswana. They cultivate a fair variety of crops, most important of which are maize, millet, pumpkins, and groundnuts, and their exploitation of the rich, natural sub-tropical vegetation for purposes of nutrition, economic pursuits, and medico-magical practices is exceedingly thorough. The few cattle 231 that are reared are significant, not for subsistence or as wealth, but for

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938, 1961-1962) 1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1]The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*motupo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *motupo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *moloko* or